

REMARKS

This amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed August 18, 2005.

Claims 1 and 6 have been amended, Claims 3 and 8 have been canceled, and Claims 11 and 12 have been added to more clearly define the present invention. Claims 1, 4 – 6, 9 – 12 are therefore presented in the case.

Claim Objections

Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to obviate the objections thereto. It is therefore requested that these objections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

35 USC 112 – Claim Rejections

Claims 1, 3 – 6, and 8 – 10 have been rejected under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement in that the phrase “an organic solvent-based liquid coating” in Claim 1 and the phrase “dimensioned for delivering an organic solvent-based liquid bead coating composition” in Claim 6 constitute new matter. This rejection is traversed. It is submitted that the subject matter of these phrases is fully supported in the application as originally filed. The terms “liquid coating”, “liquid composition”, “liquid coating composition”; “solvent coating” are used throughout the application as filed (See: Page 3, line 3; Page 3, line 7; Page 3, line 13; Page 3, line 16; Page 4, line 4; Claims 1 and 6). Moreover, at Page 4, line 14, an example of an organic solvent-based coating is given, i. e., polyvinyl butyral in methyl ethyl ketone. It is submitted that the terms rejected have full support in the application as originally filed and that one skilled in the art would recognize that the example given is just one of many organic solvent-based coatings that can be used to carry out the present invention. It is therefore requested that these rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn.

35 USC 103 – Claim Rejections

The rejection of claims 1, 3 – 6, and 8 – 10 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki US Patent 5,552,188 in view of Levy US Patent 4,428,724 and Quiel US Patent Application Publication 2002/016441 A1 is traversed.

The present invention as defined by the claims in the case are clearly novel and nonobvious over the references cited. Suzuki is cited for disclosing a method and apparatus for bead coating an organic solvent-based coating on a web using a coating hopper and smooth backing roller without electrostatic assist. Because a smooth backing roll is used, the problems resulting from an air film between the roll and moving web are created. There is no disclosure or discussion in Suzuki of how to solve these problems which are solved by the claimed invention. The stated object in Suzuki "is to provide a coating apparatus capable of preventing deflection of the slide hopper owing to changes in temperature" (Col. 2, lines 51 – 52). The solution disclosed is to use a slide hopper composed of a material with a coefficient of linear expansion of 3×10^{-6} /degree C. or less. The problems encountered and alleged to be solved in Suzuki are not the same as in the present invention and Suzuki clearly does not negative invention in the present claims.

Levy is cited as disclosing a grooved processing roller having 7 – 15 grooves per mm having depths of 20 or 80 microns. Claims 1 and 6 have been amended to more clearly define the present invention by limiting the pattern of the circumferential grooves in the backing roll to from about 1.6 grooves per mm. to about 4 grooves per mm (Spec. Page 4, lines 16 – 17). Levy teaches away from this groove pattern "Further, if less than about 60 to 70 grooves per centimeter [6 to 7 grooves per millimeter], undesirable embossing of the film surface takes place" (Col. 2, lines 24 – 26). The reason why is that the problem to be solved in Levy is completely different from the problem to be solved by the present invention. In Levy, the grooved processing roll is not used in a film coating system, but rather is used to transfer heat between the processing rolls and thermoplastic or thermosetting film. The processing rolls disclosed include quench rolls, heat set rolls, and heated or cooled stretch rolls. (See: Col. 1, lines 64 – 68.) The problem solved by the present invention, which does not use a roll to transfer heat between the backuo roll and the film coating, is to minimize temperature gradients in the web that lead to coating non-uniformities. Since Levy does not disclose a coating method, it is submitted that it is not properly combined with Suzuki to negative invention in the claims in the case.

Quiel is distinguishable because it uses an electrostatic assist which is precluded in the claimed invention. Combining Quiel with Suzuki negatives the

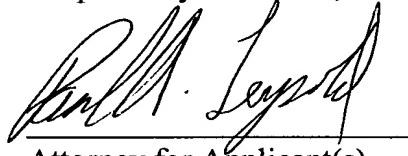
reason Suzuki was cited, i. e., that it discloses a coating process that does not use electrostatic assist . It is submitted that the Examiner has used impermissible hindsight in combining the references to reject the claims now in the application.

Clearly, Claims 1, 4 – 6, and 9 – 12 are novel and nonobvious over the cited references.

Conclusion

It is submitted that the claims in the application are allowable and that this application is in condition for allowance. It is therefore requested that the objections and rejections be withdrawn and this application passed to issuance,

Respectfully submitted,



Attorney for Applicant(s)
Registration No. 26,664

Paul A. Leipold/rgd
Rochester, NY 14650
Telephone: 585-722-5023
Facsimile: 585-477-1148

If the Examiner is unable to reach the Applicant(s) Attorney at the telephone number provided, the Examiner is requested to communicate with Eastman Kodak Company Patent Operations at (585) 477-4656.